



Commerce
Subcabinet
Guidance Collaboration Action

June 24, 2020
WebEx Teleconference
2:00pm – 4:00pm

Attendees:

Cabinet Members:

Kelly Schulz, Secretary, Department of Commerce, Chair
Jimmy Rhee, Special Secretary, Governor's Office of Small Minority and Women Business Affairs (GOSBA)
Tiffany Robinson, Secretary, Department of Labor
Ben Grumbles, Secretary, Department of Environment (MDE)
Deputy Secretary Earl Lewis, Jr. for Greg Slater, Secretary, Department of Transportation (MDOT)
Robert McCord, Secretary, Department of Planning (MDP)
Michael Higgs, Director of Assessments & Taxation (SDAT)
Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio, Secretary, Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
Deputy Secretary Julie Oberg for Joe Bartenfelder, Secretary, Department of Agriculture (MDA)
Wendi Peters, Special Secretary, Smart Growth

Guests:

Meredith Wimbrow, Office of the Governor
Ryan Snow, GOIA
Gretchen Hardman, GOIA
Deputy Secretary Horacio Tablada MDE
Deputy Secretary Nelson Reichart, Department of General Services
Allison Cordell, Governor's Office of Performance Improvement (GOPI)
Kory Boone, SDAT
Kaitlin Marsden, Labor
Mike Pantelides, Labor
Ann Gunning, Labor
Janice Walker-Emeogo, Labor
Todd Scott, DHCD
Marcie Castaneda, DHCD
Joe Griffiths, MDP
Roger Campos, DHCD

Commerce Staff:

Julie Woepke
Kyle McColgan
Jayson Knott
Sarah Sheppard
Brigitte Peters
Andrew Sargent
Wade Haerle
Nancy McCrea
Mike Siers
Tom Riford
Elizabeth Carven

I. Call to Order

Secretary Schulz called the meeting to order at 1:10pm.

II. Review and approval of April 30, 2020 Minutes

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the minutes of the February 13, 2020 meeting were approved.

III. Chair Update

Secretary Schulz provided an update on the various communication channels deployed to provide up-to-date information to the business community and public since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. She provided an update on the status of distribution of the Department's four (4) COVID-19 Grants and Loans. Secretary Schulz then presented an update on the Maryland Marketing Campaign. Three (3) of the recently released videos were shown and she described the new Maryland Back to Business webpages launched on the open.maryland.gov website to assist businesses with guidance on reopening.

Secretary Schulz then introduced the Michael Siers, Economist, who provided an update on the State's current economic conditions. Mr. Siers reviewed pre-COVID-19 unemployment rate, compared to the national rate, described how the rate changed over the course of several months and in comparison to the nation and the region. He then described industry sectors most impacted, and where job gains are occurring. Mr. Siers then discussed consumer spending, job postings, and factors to watch to determine when the State's economy will rebound.

Secretary Schulz introduced Jayson Knott, Senior Director to provide an update on the three (3) recent wins, two (2) pending announcements, and described new and ongoing open opportunities. He highlighted the strongest new interest in the state is related to the BioHealth and Life Sciences and data centers. (All Presentations on file.)

IV. Secretaries Updates

Labor Secretary Tiffany Robinson reported on the COVID-19 Layoff Aversion Fund, unemployment rate and described the first in the country, BEACON One-Stop and Virtual Assistant. She stated the system was deployed to assist with Unemployment Insurance Claims. She added the Department also increased phone services, tutorials, and provided additional information to assist claimants.

GOSBA Special Secretary Jimmy Rhee reported on the procurement forecast. He reminded the Subcabinet of the importance of prompt payment to minority enterprises and subcontractors for State contracts. Special Secretary Rhee discussed the \$15,000 threshold for small procurements and that a study is underway with the City of Frederick on the disparity with minority contracts to eliminate discrimination. He concluded by thanking the Department of Commerce for assistance with an economic impact study.

MDOT Deputy Secretary Earl Lewis, Jr. provided updates to the COVID-19 Response and Recovery related to the Department and announced new leadership at the Port and State Highway Administration. Deputy Secretary Lewis highlighted three (3) key projects completed or underway: the I-270 at Watkins Mills Road, US 1 College Park and I-95 at Belvidere Road, noting the first virtual ribbon cutting. He concluded by providing an update to MDOT-wide travel volumes.

DNR Secretary Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio reported on State Parks visitations that are reaching capacity, the importance of the Conservation Corps, and the uptick in vendors and public private partnerships. She

described several partnerships including one with the Maryland Restaurant Association and the Departments of Agriculture and Commerce.

MDP Secretary Rob McCord provided an update on the U.S. Census and data collection. He stated the response rate nationally is 61.6% and Maryland is at 65.6%. He reported that door-to-door collection would begin on August 11, 2020. He stated a 2019 Study conducted concluded that the Census has a \$16B impact to the State. He urged participants to complete their form and promote the importance of the Census.

MDE Secretary Ben Grumbles thanked MDOT leadership for telework assistance and electric vehicle support. Secretary Grumbles referenced an Eastern Shore pipeline project and litigation related to the Verso Paper Mill closure and contamination. He noted a number of new brownfields opportunities that would lead to modernizing infrastructure and expressed appreciation related to the leadership of the Sustainable Materials Management (SM3) efforts leading to new business opportunities – repurposing waste to wealth.

Agriculture Deputy Secretary Julie Oberg thanked Commerce related to the horse industry. She stated that the Department will be returning employees on Administrative Leave back to the office in the coming weeks. She stated the Department is making physical improvements as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Department of General Services (DGS). She reported on a bi-weekly Food Chain Task Force that addresses any issues and reported that state livestock shows will begin. She concluded by stating the Maryland Ice Cream Trail and Buy Local campaigns, while understandably adjusted, will begin.

SDAT Director Michael Higgs reported staff returning two (2) – three (3) times a week. He stated that some staff will continue teleworking and that there is a reorganization of the workforce. He stated business filings have doubled, and that the Department began accepting appointments. He concluded by stating the tax filing extension ends July 15, 2020.

Smart Growth Special Secretary Wendi Peters reported on recent coal, supply chain and advanced technologies grant applications related to the Appalachian Regional Commission. She announced a July Public Forum that will provide resources and tools to help local government partners. (All presentations are on file.)

V. Subcabinet Workgroups

Presentations were given by the Leaders of the five (5) Workgroups: Customer Service, Job Creators, Workforce Development, Small Business, Regional Resources and SM3. The Regional Resources Regional Leaders also provided updates and opportunities and Action Plans where appropriate. (All presentations and reports are on file.)

VI. Adjournment

There being no further discussion and upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 4:10 pm.